locally produced commodities by the people living along both sides of the India-China border as per the prevailing customary practice are allowed freely:—

Imports

1. Goat skins, 2. Sheep skins, 3. Horses, 4. Sheep, 5. Goats, 6. Wool, 7. Silk, 8. Yak Tails, 9. Yak Hair, 10. China Clay, 11. Borax, 12. Szaibelyita, 13. Butter, 14. Goat cashmere (Pasham), 15. salt.

The above items are exempted from duty when imported in India from China through border trade *vide* notification No. 158/94-Custom dt. 29th July, 1994.

Exports

1. Agriculture implements, 2. Blankets, 3. Copper Products, 4. Clothes, 5. Textiles, 6. Cycles, 7. Coffee, 8. Tea, 9. Barley, 10. Rice, 11. Flour, 12. Dry Fruit, 13. Dry and fresh vegetables, 14. Vegetable oil, 15. Gur and Misri, 16. Tobacco, 17. Snuff, 18. Cigarettes, 19. Canned Food, 20. Agro-Chemical, 21. Local Herbs, 22. Dyes, 23. Spices, 24. Watches, 25. Shoes, 26. Kerosene Oil, 27. Stationery, 28. Utensils, 29. Wheat (Ua & Buck)

The border trade through Nathu La includes overland trade and the exchange of commodities by the residents along the border between the Tibet Autonomous Region of China and the State of Sikkim of India. The people of Sikkim living along the border would be able to export to China 29 items mentioned above and they would also be able to import from China 15 items exempted from duty.

Settlement of salt pan lands In Mumbai

2752. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had mooted any proposal to open up salt pan lands for settlement in Mumbai;

(b) if so, whether Government studied the adverse effect of reclamation of coastal land and encroachment of mangroves in this area;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether the Ministry is aware of the approximate number of workers working in Salt production industry; if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL POLICY AND PROMOTION, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) There is no proposal to reclaim any coastal land or allow any development in tracks with mangroves. The question, therefore, does not arise.

(d) About 1.20 lakh workers are employed in the country in the salt industry and the average number of workers in Mumbai in this industry is 437.

Agreement of Safta

†2753. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have entered into an agreement on relating to South Asian Free Trade Area;

(b) if so, which countries have been included so far in this agreement;

(c) the categories under which these countries have been put into; and

(d) whether any assessment regarding the increase or decrease in the revenue of the Government as a result of decline in rates of import duty under this agreements has been made and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) India is a signatory of the Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) which has come into force from 1 January 2006. The other signatories of SAFTA are Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

(c) India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have been categorized as Non-Least Developed Contracting States (Non-LDCs) and Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives and Nepal have been categorized as least Development Contracting States. (LDCs).

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.